

IN THE CLAIMS:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

1. (*Canceled*).

2. (*Currently Amended*): An illumination apparatus for an optical instrument as claimed in claim 1, ~~wherein organic component of the organic/inorganic composite material is a component having a glass-transition temperature higher than 150°C comprising:~~

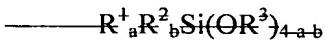
an illumination means outputting illumination light; and

an optical element positioned on the light path of the illumination light outputted from the illumination means, the optical element comprising organic/inorganic composite material,

wherein the organic/inorganic composite material is made of organic component and inorganic component which are mixed in complex with each other; and with organic component of the organic/inorganic composite material is a component having a glass-transition temperature higher than 150°C.

3. (*Original*): An illumination apparatus for an optical instrument as claimed in claim 1 or 2, ~~wherein the organic/inorganic composite material contains at least one of the components represented by the following general formula (1) or (2) comprising:~~

General Formula (1)



~~wherein R¹ and R² are the same or different organic groups, R³ is an alkyl group, and alkyl halide group, and aryl group or an aryl halide group of which carbon number is between 1 and 6, and "a" and "b" are integers between 0 and 2 and "a+b" is an integer between 1 and 2;~~

an illumination means outputting illumination light; and

an optical element positioned on the light path of the illumination light outputted from the illumination means, the optical element comprising organic/inorganic composite material,

wherein the organic/inorganic composite material is made of organic component and inorganic component which are mixed in complex with each other; and the organic/inorganic

composite material contains at least one of the components represented by the following formula (2),



General Formula (2)

(M^1 is at least one of metal elements which is selected from a group consisting of Al, Be, Ge, Hf, La, Mg, Sc, Ta, Ti, V, Y, Zn, and Zr, R^4 is an alkyl group, an alkyl halide group, an aryl group or an aryl halide group of which carbon number is between 1 and 6, and "n" is a positive integer as a valence of the metal element M^1).

4. (*Currently Amended*): An illumination apparatus for an optical instrument as claimed in claim ~~4~~3, wherein the organic/inorganic composite material contains a component having a glass-transition temperature higher than 150°C as its organic component and a component capable of transmitting lights in a range including the visible wavelength range and the ultraviolet wavelength range as its inorganic component.

5. *Cancelled.*

6. (*Currently Amended*): An illumination apparatus for an optical instrument as claimed in claim ~~4~~2, wherein the illumination apparatus for the optical instrument is an illumination apparatus for a microscope.

7. (*Currently Amended*): An illumination apparatus for an optical instrument as claimed in ~~claim 1 or claim 2~~, wherein the organic/inorganic composite material is made of at least one structure selected from the group of:

- a. a composite structure, in which inorganic nano-scale fine particles are dispersed in a polymer matrix formed of organic backbones; and
- b. a copolymerized structure, in which a monomer or an oligomer formed of organic backbones and a monomer or oligomer having inorganic element are copolymerized.